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COMX 480.50: Health Communication - Online

Heather L. Voorhees

University of Montana, Missoula, heather.voorhees@umontana.edu

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COMX 480: Health Communication

Fall 2020



Professor: Heather Voorhees, Ph.D.
E-mail: heather.voorhees@mso.umt.edu

Class meetings: ONLINE ONLY—Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10:30-11:30 a.m.
Zoom link: <https://umontana.zoom.us/j/2143719310>
Password: Grizz5

Office: Liberal Arts 356

Office hours: Virtual only this semester, Wednesdays, 1-3 p.m.
Zoom Link: <https://umontana.zoom.us/j/99070011736>
Password: HealthComm

Required texts: du Pré, A. (2016). *Communicating about Health: Current Issues and Perspectives* (5th ed.). New York, NY: Oxford University Press
*Required additional/replacement readings will be available on Moodle.
Additionally, I may assign more/less reading as the course continues to enhance your learning.

Course Description & Objectives

“Health” and “communication” are both large, all-encompassing concepts – so, what do we mean when we talk about “health communication?” Communication, both verbal and non-verbal, about well-being and illness happens all around us, in many different forms: for example, when patients discuss treatments with physicians, or when people have conversations about their health with friends and family members. We also see health communication on an organizational level, because laws and policies affect the way that health care is provided, which impacts how people feel about their care providers. Finally, we see health communication in media campaigns that seek to educate people or change their behavior.

Communication Studies 480 is designed to investigate the nature of health communication. Specifically, through readings, lectures, discussion, assignments, and experiential activities, this class will explore the theory, research, and skills associated with communicating in various health-related contexts. This will include communication among and between patients, providers, family caregivers, healthcare organizations, communities, and in mediated messages in the marketing and promotion of health information and the politics of health care. We will examine the intrapersonal, interpersonal, and intergroup aspects of health so that you may become more mindful, educated, and effective health communicators.

By the end of this course you will be able to:

- explain why health communication is important and how it influences (and is influenced by) multiple levels of human behavior.
- explain how the health-related communication of patients, healthcare providers, and family caregivers inform, differ from, and intersect with one another.
- analyze and describe how social, political, and cultural factors affect health communication and healthcare.

- define the role of communication in maintaining health and coping with illness and death.
- identify the various approaches for translating research into practice, including community-based participatory research, education, edutainment, documentaries, and key steps in planning, implementing, and assessing health promotion campaigns
- effectively work with others on a multiple-member team to complete a final project, which includes practicing team conflict management skills.
- practice clear, concise, and effective writing.

How This Course Works

This is an online-only course. Twice a week, I will host a real-time Zoom lecture. I highly encourage you to attend these class meetings! You will be able to ask questions and interact with me, and I can get to know you better. However, if you are unable to join us live, you can watch the recording of the class at any time during the week. After each class period (no matter when you view the class video), you can earn up to 5 points by engaging with the material somehow – taking a quiz, writing a short reflection essay, etc.

You can watch the video classes and complete the activities at any point during the week; everything is due by 5 p.m. the next Monday.

How do I attend online class?

Join us via Zoom Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 10:30-11:30 a.m. Click this link:

<https://umontana.zoom.us/j/2143719310> to join the group. **Please note: Class sessions will be recorded and posted on our Moodle page.** If you are uncomfortable with this, please contact me directly.

- Make sure that your Zoom name is correct, and is your actual name.
- Arrive within 5 minutes of our scheduled start time and stay until the end of class.
- Please keep your camera ON, unless I instruct otherwise.
- Mute your microphone, unless I call on you.
- Ask a general question about the day's topic using the Q&A function in Zoom. If you have an immediate question about a concept, or you don't understand something, get my attention by "Raising your Hand."

When are assignments due?

The weekly class assignments (including class content quizzes) will be due by 5 p.m. Monday of the following week. That means you can watch the class lectures and finish the activities any time during the week.

Tips For Success

This is different than an in-person course, but it is not easier or harder. I expect you to devote as much time to this course as you would an in-person course, though you may allocate that time differently.

As a student in a 400-level course, you are expected to:

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| □ attend class and be engaged | □ locate, read and absorb scholarly sources |
| □ complete assigned readings | |
| □ complete all work by the assigned due date | □ critically reflect on course concepts |

To succeed in an online course, I recommend that you:

- Schedule a specific, consistent twice-weekly time to watch the online lectures, do the required reading, and participate in online discussion forums. Treat your online work like a recurring appointment, just like you would for an in-person class.

- Hold yourself accountable, and be responsible for doing the homework and turning things in on time.
- Create a physical or virtual study space in which you eliminate distractions. This might entail setting up a separate physical area of your room, and/or creating a peaceful virtual “space” by turning off your texting apps, social media, email, and limiting internet access to only the class resources. [Click here](#) for a list of resources that can help you block distractions while studying, some of which are free.
- Learn how to navigate Moodle. Do you know how to find assigned readings? Do you know how to log into a class seminar?
- Ask for help early and often If you are confused about anything or can’t find a resource.
- Make the effort to get to know your classmates as much as you can, through online posts, small group discussions, and video class sessions.

Classroom Etiquette

In health communication, we often discuss materials that are sensitive (or even taboo): reproductive and sexual health, eating disorders, mental health, dying, etc. I ask that you respect others’ experiences while also exploring your own. Also, I encourage you to ask questions (even tough ones that I may not know the answer to). I will do the same. This type of learning will be a testament to the power of health communication in our lives and the communities in which we interact. Please talk to me in class or individually if you have any questions or concerns with this class.

Grading

Your final grade will be based on attendance and engagement, two exams, in-class activities, and a final health communication campaign team assignment. The grading breakdown is as follows:

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Total Points Possible</u>
Online Class Engagement/Activity	140 points (10 points each week)
Application Activities	60 points (3 activities, 20 points each)
Exam 1	50 points
Exam 2	50 points
<u>Final Project (Health Campaign)</u>	<u>100 points</u>
TOTAL	400 points

Grades will be based on the following scale:

- A= EXCELLENT. Greatly exceeds requirements. Shows outstanding levels of creativity, skill, initiative, and/or effort
- B= GOOD. Exceeds requirements. Shows substantial creativity, skills, initiative, and/or effort
- C= AVERAGE. Meets the requirements in every respect, but does not exceed requirements
- D= BELOW AVERAGE. Meets some requirements, but deficient in others
- F= POOR. Deficient in most or all requirement

A+	97-100%	B-	80-82%	D	63-66%
A	93-96%	C+	77-79%	D-	60-62%
A-	90-92%	C	73-76%	F	59% and below
B+	87-89%	C-	70-72%		
B	83-86%	D+	67-69%		

Assignment/Exam Description

Online Lecture

Twice a week, I will present an online “class” via Zoom. During our class sessions, we will sometimes have guest speakers, or break into small discussion groups, or otherwise make our time together as engaging as possible. I highly encourage you to join me at that time, if you’re able! Otherwise, you are expected to watch the recording of the videos as soon as you can.

After each class, you will either a) take a short quiz on the lecture material, b) write a short (2 sentences) recap of what you learned, or c) participate in a small-group discussion (via a forum on Moodle) about the lecture. I will let you know which of those three activities I’ve chosen at the beginning of the lecture. Successful completion of that activity will earn you 5 participation points. Your participation in these activities must be meaningful – if you simply write nonsense recaps or forum posts that don’t relate to the topic at hand, you will not receive your participation points.

ALL WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS ARE DUE BY 5 P.M. OF THE FOLLOWING MONDAY. For example, the class assignments given during the week of Monday, Aug. 24-Friday, Aug. 28 are due by 5 p.m. Monday, Aug 31.

Application Activities

Three times throughout the semester, we will participate in Application Activities, which are more extensive than the weekly lecture or reading engagement assignments. You will either work together with a small group, or discuss your findings with a small online group; either way, I expect you to be an active and engaged member of your ensemble.

Exams

There will be two exams testing your knowledge of health communication concepts. The two exams (mid-term/final) will be comprised of true/false, multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions. I will conduct exam review sessions and hand out review worksheets to assist you in preparing for each exam. The final exam will only cover material that wasn’t on the first exam (thus, it is not cumulative).

Final Project

Working in a small group, you will create a Health Communication Campaign/Intervention that addresses a specific health issue and translates basic research (use journal articles as your foundation, incl. the articles read for class, if you want) to a specific audience. This project will consist of a team paper and an in-class presentation. An assignment sheet with specific details will follow.

Extra Credit

Beyond a few “extra” questions on exams, no extra credit will be offered in this class.

Grades

Final grades are what you have earned. Therefore, extra credit will not be given at the end of the semester to boost your grade. You will have ample opportunity to increase your grade throughout the semester with in-class activity and assignment grades.

Expectations for Assignments

Writing Quality

All papers are expected to reflect university-level writing quality: spelling, organizational, and grammatical errors will greatly reduce your final grade. The University's Writing and Public Speaking Center offers one-on-one assistance with written assignments and oral presentations, available on a drop-in or by-appointment basis. They can provide feedback on written assignments, as well as help develop strategies for re-writes. Information on these services can be found at [/www.umt.edu/writingcenter/](http://www.umt.edu/writingcenter/).

Academic Integrity

As a student of the University of Montana, you must practice academic honesty and are bound by the following Code of Academic Conduct: <http://www.umt.edu/student-affairs/community-standards/student-code-of-conduct-2020-pdf>. Academic misconduct includes:

- ❑ Plagiarism (see below)
- ❑ Misconduct during an examination or academic exercise
- ❑ Unauthorized possession of examination or other course materials
- ❑ Tampering with course materials
- ❑ Submitting false information
- ❑ Submitting work previously presented in another course
- ❑ Improperly influencing conduct, such as influencing an instructor to unfairly change your grade
- ❑ Substituting for another student during an examination
- ❑ Facilitating academic dishonesty, or knowingly helping another person commit academic dishonesty

What is plagiarism?

All course work should be original and unique for this class (i.e., do not use work from other courses even if it is your own). Plagiarism is defined as quoting or paraphrasing from other sources without acknowledging/citing the source of your information, or presenting quoted material as your own words.

Examples of plagiarism include:

- ❑ Cutting-and-pasting material, or paraphrasing ideas, from an academic source without properly citing it
- ❑ Using portions of something you wrote in a previous class in an assignment in this course (yep, you can plagiarize yourself!)
- ❑ Reviewing a friend's assignment, then using a couple sentences of hers in your own assignment
- ❑ Purchasing essays from an online service (if someone else wrote it, but your name is on it, it's plagiarism, PLAIN AND SIMPLE).

Plagiarism results in, at minimum, failure on the assignment, but can result in failure of the course and reporting to academic authorities at the university. You must be very clear about attribution of sources and you must know how to cite sources in a paper. Students who are unfamiliar with how to cite sources should consult a style manual guide, such as <https://owl.purdue.edu/>. If you have

questions concerning what constitutes plagiarism, please discuss this with me. Not knowing the definition of plagiarism does not excuse you from the consequences.

Breaking the Code of Academic Conduct Integrity

If I suspect you of breaking the Code of Academic Conduct in any way, I will first request a private conversation with you to discuss the issue. If, after that meeting, I still have suspicions and/or proof of inappropriate behavior, I will report the matter to the department chair and/or the college dean. You are entitled to dispute the claim, and appeal any decision made in your case. Please review the Code of Academic Conduct for more details.

Consequences for breaking the Code of Academic Conduct can include, but is not limited to: failing the assignment; failing the course; suspension or expulsion from the University; or the University's refusal to grant a degree.

Late Work Policy

Be sure to pay attention to due dates for assignments. Work that is turned in past the announced deadline—without an approved, excused absence – will lose 20% of total points possible each 24-hour period it is late.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact the instructor for a confidential discussion of their individual needs for academic accommodation. It is the policy of the University of Montana to provide flexible and individualized accommodation to students with documented disabilities that may affect their ability to fully participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. To receive accommodation services, students must be registered with Disability Services for Students, at dss@umontana.edu or (406) 243-2243.

COVID-related rules

We are living in interesting times, and a global pandemic requires special rules. Please make special note of the following requirements:

- If you are feeling ill, contact the Curry Health Center at (406) 243-4330 to report your symptoms.
- If your illness causes you to fall behind in coursework, contact me directly ASAP to discuss. We can work together to figure out a modified plan for you. Just like for any medical issue, you will need to provide evidence that you sought medical help and were assessed by a licensed doctor.
- Up-to-Date COVID-19 Information from the University of Montana is available at the UM Coronavirus Website: <https://www.umt.edu/coronavirus>
- UM COVID-19 Fall 2020 website: <https://www.umt.edu/coronavirus/fall2020.php>

Tentative Course Schedule

[*Readings are subject to change!](#)

Week	Date	Topic	Assignment
1	TH 8/20	Introduction to the Course	Attend Lecture
2	T 8/25	What Is Health? What is Communication?	<u>Read:</u> Ch. 1
	TH 8/27	Our Healthcare System	<u>Read:</u> Ch. 2 <u>Read:</u> Accidents of History Created U.S. Health System (alternately, you can listen to the 7-minute podcast here)
3	T 9/1	Patient Perspectives	<u>Read:</u> Ch. 4
	TH 9/3	Patient Perspectives	<u>Watch:</u> One of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Living with a Chronic Illness (Crohn's Disease) □ Living with MS □ Balancing Medical Issues with a Full-Time Job (T1 Diabetes)
4	T 9/8	Social Support	<u>Read:</u> Ch. 8
	TH 9/10	Application Activity 1	
5	T 9/15	Patient-Provider Communication	<u>Read:</u> Ch. 3
	TH 9/17	Patient-Provider Communication	
6	T 9/22	Healthcare Providers' Perspectives	<u>Read:</u> Ch. 5
	TH 9/24	Healthcare Providers' Perspectives	<u>Listen:</u> Sincerely, X: Dr. Burnout.
7	T 9/29	Unit 1 Exam Review	Class will be an exam review, so I highly encourage you to attend so you can ask detailed questions about what will be on the test!
	TH 10/1	Application Activity 2	
8	T 10/6	Unit 1 Exam	
	TH 10/8	Cultural Perspectives on Health	
9	T 10/13	Health Disparities and Structural Competency	
	TH 10/15	Health Disparities and Structural Competency	<u>Read:</u> Ch. 6 <u>Listen:</u> Code Switch: This Racism is Killing Me
10	T 10/20	Health Comm & Media	<u>Read:</u> Chap. 11
	TH 10/22	Health Comm & Media	<u>Read:</u> Moyer-Guse, Chung & Jain (2011), "Identification with characters and discussion of taboo topics after exposure to an entertainment narrative about sexual health"

11	T 10/27	Designing Successful Health Campaigns	<u>Read</u> : Chap. 14
	TH 10/29	Designing Successful Health Campaigns	<u>Read</u> : “Public Health Communication: Lessons Learned from the ACA”
12	T 11/3	Instructor Office Hours	No class today, but schedule group meetings with me regarding your final projects
	TH 11/5	Application Activity 3	
13	T 11/10	All About COVID! The good (communication), the bad (communication), and the ugly (communication)	
	TH 11/12	Community-Based Participatory Research	<u>Read</u> : Article to be announced
14	T 11/17	EXAM REVIEW	Attend Lecture (which is exam review)
	TH 11/19	Group Projects Due	
15	Week of 11/23-11/25	EXAM 2	